New Layout (1) I have been an Elektor reader since 1977. Your magazine has always kept up with times and this new format is no exception. Graphics/icon based format is the way forward and you could not have done better. One picture tells a thousand words. Elektor is simply the best.
Cemal Ozturk

New Layout (2) Hi, you have asked for feedback on the restyled Elektor magazine. I like the new style, it is reminiscent of the style used in the French and Italian electronics mags which I often buy when on holiday abroad. I would like to make one adverse comment, I do not like white characters on black background. The readability is very poor. If one must have a black background then yellow or magenta is quite good. I know this applies to the monitor and may well apply to the printed page. Perhaps you could do an experiment in a future issue and invite readers' comments. I have been a reader for very long time and have some of the earliest issues.
Mike Baker

New Layout (3) I'm afraid the 'new look' is a bit of a disappointment. The use of a full page image preceding major articles is clear attempt to fill the magazine without having to create content. The April 2004 issue has at least seven pages wasted in this manner (nearly 10% of the issue!).
Magazine subscribers such as me will have to think long and hard when it comes to renewal time if this practice is maintained. I would rather see reprints of manufacturers' datasheets or even adverts than this. The new logo also instantly made me think of other ill-conceived re-branding exercises, such as BP's daft flower thing and the 'Royal Mail' madness during their brief 'Consignia' phase. Your old logo was instantly recognisable and yet not dated, why any company would wish to abandon years of branding is beyond me. I can only assume that there are people in the company spending too much time 'in meetings'.
If all this seems negative, it is due in no small part to the high regard I have had for your magazine in the past. I would not wish to see *Elektor Electronics* go down the same path that others have, such as *Wireless World*. Change for the sake of change is madness.
Owen Grantham.

New Layout (4) As we say on our side of the pond, it's OK. Though sometimes, as in the car industry much of the time, one prefers evolution to revolution. Still, that's a matter of taste.
However, there is a physically large flaw with the cover — none other than that great big 'e'. Maybe you had your reasons, but really, it's too clever by half, no, by more than half. It's over the top, no, beneath the bottom. I can't even begin to imagine what you were thinking. Could therapeutic quantities of Guinness Stout have been involved somehow? Rather than connoting sophistication, it calls to mind every oh-so-revolutionary but lame and hackneyed e-this, e-that, and e-the-other-thing that has ever wended its way into an e-business e-advert e-cliché during the entire course of e-history. And — e-eek — it also reminds one of Microsoft's Internet e-xplorer, which … let's not go there.
It would be a considerable kindness for you to lose it just as soon as the e-novelty wears off.
Paul Schick

New Layout (5) I was very surprised to receive a copy of your restyled Elektor Electronics magazine. I am 54 years old and wear glasses, which were barely adequate to resolve the printed words on pages 5 onwards. When it came to reading the circuit diagram, I had to resort to using a magnifying glass to read the component values! I consider my eyesight to be average for my age and therefore assume that your team are much younger than me and therefore have better eyesight? My advice to you is to not proceed with this mini version if you wish to retain your older readers and indeed younger readers with less than perfect eyesight.
C. Sinclair

New Layout (6) I think it's great. Keep the good articles coming. Anything of educational basics for amateurs like me would be welcome.
Brian Moore

New Layout (7) The magazine appears to have grown up. Please keep it in your new format.
Edward Williams

Project c+ (1) Dear Jan, referring to the 'time inversion' article, The oscillograms in the article fail to use a time reference in order to *locate* ourselves in *time*.
At the time of pressing the trigger (to initiate the approximate 1-second pulse to drive the pulse shaper) we should establish the reference on the oscilloscope 1 and 2 (channels B).
At the moment it seems that the very long transmission line is a momentary short circuit to the poor overloaded opamp… the wave travels to the receiver shows itself on scope 2 and LED, then travels back to the source and at last makes the led light up.
Of course there is a delay as the signal has travelled twice the distance. Nice try….
As I was looking for your email address I suddenly thought of the month… I hope some people did not trim too much. I like the touch with the high precision parts. Thank you for a fantastic magazine.
G. Brennet (by email)

Project c+ (2) Dear Editor, I am going to buy shares in Project c+. You are on a winner!
Don Phelps (by email)

Project c+ (3) Hi Jan, you seem to have overlooked an important part when analysing your circuit. The connection between the sending and receiving end is a *distributed network*. If you include this in your transfer-function, you will find that at a given time *t*, the solution for the total network is 040104, and the solution for the sending part alone is 040204. It is quite obvious that 040104 is just one time unit ahead of 040204. I hope this has clarified the obvious.

Knut Bakke (by email)

Your projects, my projects

Dear Sirs, I have been a long time reader of Elektor, and would like to thank all Elector (*sic*) staff for their superb circuits.

Your April 2004 magazine is a success and with each new issue you prove that electronics can be conveyed in interesting ways.

My favourite pastimes are audio and music and I've actually built many of your circuits. Some of these may be seen on the photographs on the enclosed CD-ROM. Equipment cases, screen prints and loudspeaker cases are all home made.

As I enjoy every good circuit you provide and build lots of them, I thought I'd show you a few examples of finished equipments.

D. Bozanic

The photographs on the CD-ROM Mr. Bozanic kindly sent us certainly prove his skills at building high-end audio equipment. The photograph reproduced here shows his version of the Prelude stereo preamp, a classic we published decades ago.

Stealing current

Dear Editor, I am constructing the project 'Burglar Alarm' published in the January 2004 issue of Elektor. I have a few doubts about the power supply section. Apparently you have not provided overcharge protection for the 12-V SLA battery. Will this not reduce battery life or destroy it due to over charging?

Also, the battery charge current limiting resistor used is 1 k (R1) and the series diode (D6) adds around 500 ohms to it. Will this combination provide enough current for efficient charging? I would like to use a 12 V/7 Ah SLA battery.

Kinjal (by email)

With lead-acid batteries (which includes sealed SLAs), charging with a certain maximum voltage such as 13.2 V or even 13.8 V also serves as an effective overcharge protection. Regarding the charge current, this is intended for continuous charging. There's nothing wrong with the current of about 0.3 mA used in this case (battery capacity 1.2 Ah) as the circuit is continuously connected to the mains. In your case, you intend to use a much larger battery and the current may be increased by changing the 1-kΩ resistor into 680 Ω. Do not use lower values as that may cause R1 to burn out.

Contact those CPLDs

Dear Jan, your 'Hands-On CPLDs' project is supported by a beautiful double-sided board. Unfortunately, the length of the PLCC socket pins and DIP switch pins is such that they can not be soldered at both sides of the board although it is clear that signals have to be routed to a number of these pins. Do you have a solution to this problem or am I barking up the wrong tree?

Philip Hyams

Double-sided boards supplied through our Readers Services are through-contacted unless otherwise stated. You need to solder at the underside of the board only. The through contact will then establish an electrical connection to any tracks that may run at the component side.

Exotic opamp

Dear Editor, I'd like to build the Audio Level Check for Line Input project published in the November 2002 issue as I find that signals from my stereo system are causing overdriven recordings. Unfortunately the TS924IN is unavailable locally, can I use a TL074 instead?

Bernard Hook (by email)

Because of the minimum supply voltage it is not possible to use a 'regular' opamp o the type you suggest. If you need to find an alternative, go for a 'rail to rail' opamp.

CORRECTIONS & UPDATES

MIDI Lights & Slide Control

March 2001, p. 26-33, 000179-1.

A few readers have reported lamp flicker when the control is operated. No problems are observed with constant brightness. Flicker may be suppressed by lengthening the synchronisation pulse. This is easiest done by increasing the value of C1 and C2 to 3.3 nF.

MailBox Terms

- Publication of reader's correspondence is at the discretion of the Editor.
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